

Montgomery County DOT Comments on TTG Concept Plan

Design Considerations

The assumption is to maintain the existing curb width by accepting the minimum lane widths in the various RTV alternates. We note that most of the routes identified in the TTG report are along major arterials or major highways. The County's Context Sensitive Road Design Manual recognizes that wider lanes are needed on these higher volume roadways.

In particular, we suggest that travel lanes adjacent to contraflow lanes need greater separation to avoid oncoming vehicles. The center reversible RTV lanes recommended are adjacent to opposing traffic lanes in both AM and PM directions, with narrow lanes separated only by a 6" wide curb.

Therefore, we suggest that the lane widths proposed in The Traffic Group's report are unacceptably narrow. For safer operation, we suggest the dimensions noted below, as examples for two of the selected alternatives, compared to the dimensions recommend by The Traffic Group.

1. RTV Alternative 1:

Lanes: Outside Middle Inside Barrier RTV Barrier Inside Middle Outside TOTAL

TTG	12	10	10	n/a	10.5	n/ a	10	10	12	74.5
Guided	14	11	11	1.5	8.5	1.5	11	11	14	83.5
Unguided	14	11	11	1.5	11	1.5	11	11	14	86.0

2. RTV Alternate 1a:

Lanes: Outside Middle Inside Barrier RTV Barrier Inside Middle Outside TOTAL

TTG	12	-	10	n/a	10.5	n/a	10	-	12	54.5
Guided	14	-	11	1.5	8.5	1.5	11	-	14	61.5
Unguided	14	-	11	1.5	11	1.5	11	-	14	64.0

Note: the RTV lanes and barrier widths noted above are minimum for "constrained" right-of-ways as noted in the APTA design guidelines. Barrier is being used here as the separation between travel lanes and RTV lane.

Design Considerations

1. Reviewing the Concept plans was difficult, in terms of understanding how the various lanes will operate. The designation of lanes as RTV vs. BAT seemed to be inconsistent, and it was not readily understood what traffic movements will be allowed and from which lane.

2. The Concept Plans recommend removing a travel lane in many roadway segments. We believe it is premature to recommend doing so until a policy is finalized for repurposing travel lanes.
3. Right-of-way (ROW) extents are not identified on the plans. ROW impacts of stations and roadway widening will require further evaluation.
4. Parameters dictating station location selection and sizing aren't specified.
5. Selection criteria aren't specified for retaining or closing median breaks to accommodate proposed median guideways.
6. There are some segments where frequent breaks in the proposed median guideway may impact the transit vehicle's ability to operate at high enough speeds to justify the investment cost of constructing the guideway. Further evaluation of corridor segments with very frequent breaks is recommended.
7. Further review is needed regarding the consistency of proposed BAT lanes with bicycle accommodations included in the Montgomery County Roadway Design Standards for Suburban Arterial Roadways.
8. Many roadways are bifurcated in the median. The Concept Plans do not show how guideways will be constructed in these areas. Retaining walls and additional widening will likely be required and are not accounted for. Randolph Road is a primary example.
9. The guideway appears to have significant shifts at many median breaks? Is that purposeful?